

Battle Road 2000



We are again seeking interpreters for Battle Road 2000!

What is an interpreter? For several years, a dedicated group of reenactors have worked to bring the Battle Road ceremonies and reenactments to life for the public. A majority of these interpreters have been women, but many men also return as interpreters each year. For the 225th anniversary of the Battle Road events, we seek to include many new interpreters so that they can be a part of Battle Road and assist with the large numbers of visitors that we anticipate.

What do interpreters do? Battle Road interpreters perform several very valuable roles. Interpreters make the public's experience more enjoyable and more educational by answering questions and talking to the public about the historical events of April 19th. Interpreters also help to ensure that the public stays within the safe areas that are designated for spectators. Visitors consistently tell us that the interpreters are one of the highlights of Battle Road.

What if I don't feel comfortable talking to the public? Being an interpreter may sound like a difficult or intimidating role -- it is not! We will give you ideas to help you approach the role in a way that you will enjoy and be comfortable with. Interpreters at previous Battle Road events have told us that they a great deal of fun, even though some were apprehensive at first about speaking with the public.

This sounds like something I would enjoy, but I don't know enough! You would probably be surprised at how much you do know. However, living history is not a full-time job for most of us, and we all find that refreshing our memory and learning more about the events of 1775 is helpful. Each year, we distribute a variety of materials -- some short, some more detailed -- to help interpreters who want to do some reading before the event. These are now available on the Battle Road reenactor web site at <http://www.ai.mit.edu/people/sfelshin/bry2k/>. They will help you to make yourself comfortable with the historical background of the events of April 19th, and know how the Battle Road events will unfold. We will also distribute paper copies at our meeting on Muster Day, described below.

OK, I'm convinced. What's the schedule? There are two dates to mark on the calendar, and we hope to add a third. First, we would like to use the third annual Muster Day on Saturday, March 25th at Buckman's Tavern in Lexington as an opportunity to meet and discuss this year's Battle Road. This is not required, but previous Muster Days have been a lot of fun and a convenient chance to talk about Battle Road. Second, of course, is Saturday, April 15th, the date of this year's Battle Road events. Finally, like last year, we hope to schedule an optional evening or weekend "workshop" -- in previous years we have had presentations by David Hackett Fischer, author of *Paul Revere's Ride*, and George Neumann, whose most recent book is *Battle Weapons of the American Revolution*.

What else do I need to know? There are a few things to remember.

- Like all other participants, you must pre-register in order to participate. This must be done through the returns that your unit commander sends to the Battle Road Committee. You must also contact Myles McConnon or John Newell directly, preferably by email at one of the addresses below. If you do not, we will not be able to include you when we distribute the information that we send directly to interpreters.

- Interpreters must dress consistently with the guidelines for Battle Road participants, which means dress and other items appropriate for New England in 1775. This is actually more important for interpreters than for other participants because you will be standing with the public -- much closer than the ten feet in the "ten foot rule"! Examples of 18th century clothing that the Battle Road guidelines prohibit include fringed and/or open hunting frocks and buckskin clothing. Examples of 20th century items that Battle Road guidelines prohibit include wristwatches, make-up, and modern shoes and eyeglasses that are obviously not 18th century. We also hope that men will seriously consider shaving beards and moustaches. Many men have already accepted a challenge to go without facial hair as a recognition of the importance of the 225th anniversary of the opening events of the American War of Independence. Please review the guidelines carefully -- you can find them on the Battle Road 2000 reenactor web site. Please feel free to contact us with any questions about appropriate New England dress and accessories. We will post additional information there from time to time.

Because Battle Road takes place at six sites in the suburban Boston area, where roads can be very congested and parking is extremely limited, we will provide transportation for all participants (including interpreters), other than some men-at-arms who will march the Battle Road. In most cases, this means that participants will be able to be at every second site as they leapfrog the British column, much as the provincials did in 1775. Since we are almost literally moving an army, we will not be able to assure transportation for anyone who is not a registered interpreter or other participant.

More information is available on the Battle Road 2000 reenactor web site.

Who should I contact to sign up or find out more? Please feel free to contact either:

Myles McConnon

John Newell